



## POSITION CLASSIFICATION/POSITION MANAGEMENT



# Position Classification/Position Management

## What is Position Classification and Position Management?

Position Classification and Position Management are partners and should go hand in hand toward achieving and maintaining the objectives of pay comparability and equal pay for jobs of substantially equal difficulty, complexity, and qualifications.

Position Classification is a term used to designate the controls, guides, and policies used in classifying graded positions in the Federal Government. The classification plan provides a structure formula for placing positions in their proper classes on the basis of (1) Kind or Subject Matter of Work; (2) Level of Difficulty; (3) Qualification Requirements. The pay plan consists of the salary rates for each grade and these may be for local or national usage.

Position Management (defined and linked to Position Classification) defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is the program process used to implement organizational restructuring and enhance efficiencies. Position management includes structuring of positions, functions, and organizations in a way that optimizes efficiency, productivity, and organizational effectiveness while maintaining the lowest possible cost.



## Philosophy on Compensation

- As a federal agency, NASA and MSFC are required by law to use the government-wide approach both for:
  - Structuring jobs and occupations (series)
  - Pay System: Pay Schedules and Pay Levels
- To the extent that the government systems provide them, MSFC practice is to make use of flexibilities that are appropriate to our situation and help us fulfill our roles and responsibilities

## Philosophy on Compensation

- System/Process choices always require a balancing act of:
  - Compatibility with law and regulations
  - What's it take to get the job done
  - Fairness and equity for employees
  - Availability of resources
  - Prudent use of taxpayer provided funds



## **Job Classification System**

- Framework for our system
  - Part of the government-wide job classification system for defining individual jobs and grouping families of jobs
  - Created by congress as part of the Classification Acts of 1923 and 1949
  - NASA added the AST (Aerospace Technology) overlay in 1961



### **These things *don't* count in classifying your position:**

- Unusual diligence or overtime
- Length of service
- Financial need
- Volume of work
- Unusual qualifications
- Relative efficiency
- Scarcity of new employees
- Personality

### **These *do*:**

- Nature and variety of work
- Difficulty of the work
- Authority and responsibility exercised
- Extent of supervisory controls over the work
- Qualification requirements of work

## **Job Classification System**

- Characteristics of our systems
  - Requires each job to be described in terms of responsibilities and the job's major features using the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format
  - Provides standards for evaluating jobs
- Typically, supervisors describe duties and responsibilities of a given position and HR staff evaluates classification of position.



# The Factor Evaluation System (FES)

## **FACTOR 1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION**

- Kind or nature of knowledges and skills needed; and
- How these knowledges and skills are used in doing the work.

## **FACTOR 2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

- How the work is assigned;
- The employee's responsibility for carrying out the work, and;
- How the work is reviewed.

## **FACTOR 3. GUIDELINES**

- The nature of guidelines for performing the work; and
- Judgement needed to apply the guidelines or develop new guides.

## **FACTOR 4. COMPLEXITY**

- Nature of the assignment;
- Difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and
- Difficulty and originality involved in performing work.

## **FACTOR 5. SCOPE AND EFFECT**

- Purpose of the work; and
- Impact of the work product or service.





# The Factor Evaluation System (FES) (continued)

## **FACTOR 6. PERSONAL CONTACTS**

- People and conditions under which contacts are made (except supervisor)

## **FACTOR 7. PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

- Reasons for contacts in Factor 6; skill needed to accomplish work through person-to-person activities

## **FACTOR 8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

- The nature, frequency, and intensity of physical activity

## **FACTOR 9. WORK ENVIRONMENT**

- The risks and discomforts imposed by physical surroundings and the safety precautions necessary to avoid accidents or discomfort.



## Job Classification System

- OPM System
  - Twenty-three (23) "0100" Groups of Occupations (Series)
  - Groups established by academic disciplines
  - Most series have classification standards
  - Titles, occupation information, and grading criteria
- NASA System
  - Seven (7) "100" Groups of Specialties
  - Groups are established by work classification
  - Has 125 AST Specialties with definitions, NASA and OPM titles, and OPM series alignment pre-determined.

## Pay Systems at MSFC

- MSFC uses government-wide pay schedules for most jobs (GS/SES/ST/SL/AD)
- Most common is the General Schedule (GS)
  - Position based system
  - Pay structure has 15 grades / 10 steps per grade / Step 4 is representative rate / Value between steps is 3.1%
  - Provides time based progression through the steps
    - 1 year waiting period / Steps 1 to 3
    - 2 year waiting period / Steps 4 to 7
    - 3 year waiting period / Steps 8 to 10
  - Maximum payable rate – Level IV of the Executive Schedule



## Pay Systems at MSFC

- Changes to GS pay system are initiated by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and approved by Congress
  - Premises of the system are:
    - a) Provide equal pay for substantially equal work
    - b) Recognize longevity and continued contributions
- Annual cost of labor adjustments have been the norm



## Pay Systems at MSFC

### Variations

- Special Salary Rates
  - OPM may set higher rates of base pay for some series (some local/some national)
  - Typically done for jobs in short supply or hard to fill
  - Current occupations include such positions as Aerospace Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Materials Engineer, Ceramics Engineer, Computer Science/IT, etc.



## Pay Systems at MSFC

### Variations (cont.)

- Locality Pay
  - Feature added by OPM to account for geographic differences in labor costs and be more competitive with the private sector
  - Tied to Employment Cost Index (ECI), not Consumer Price Index (CPI)
  - Currently 13.60% added to GS Base for Huntsville
- Ability to appoint Above Minimum Rate
  - Flexibility to match salaries for experienced new hires



## Other Pay Systems at MSFC

- **Senior Executive Service (SES)**
  - Used for top management positions above GS-15
  - System is based on rank in person rather than rank in position (Max \$154,600)
  - Managed at the Agency level
- **Scientific and Technical (ST)**
  - Used for positions above GS-15 performing R&D in scientific and engineering discipline
  - One pay range
  - Managed at the Agency level
- **Senior Level positions (SL)**
  - Can be included in the competitive or excepted service
  - Not included in SES or ST positions
  - One pay range
  - Managed at the Agency level
- **NASA Excepted positions (NEX)**
  - Used primarily to non-competitively fill critical needs in high-cost areas when it is difficult to find individuals willing to accept the positions at the regular rate of pay.
  - Covers scientific, engineering, or administrative positions outside the competitive service
  - Typically created for a specific purpose for a limited time of 3 years or less

## Promotion Processes

- OPM and MSFC policies provide for three kinds of promotions:
  - Accretion Promotions
    - Employee assumes higher graded duties along with original duties
    - Sometimes called reclassification
    - Normally used for some GS-13 Admin positions, specialty clerk positions, and some GS-14/15 positions





## Promotion Processes

- Career Ladder Promotions
  - Promotion to a higher grade within an established career ladder
  - Typically, ladders are:
    - AST GS-07 to GS-13
    - Administrative Prof. GS-05 to GS-12
    - Technical positions GS-05 to GS-9/11
    - Clerical positions GS-02 to GS-06



## Promotion Processes

- Competitive Placement Plan (CPP) Promotions
  - Promotions resulting from selection from a posted and competed job
  - Goal is to give all qualified an opportunity to be considered
  - Typically used for GS-14/15 supervisory positions, GS-07 + clerical positions and most GS-13/14/15 administrative positions

## Promotion Processes

- Time in Grade Guidelines are:

	<u>Technical</u>	<u>Administrative</u>
•GS-07 to GS-09	6 months	12 months
•GS-09 to GS-11	minimum of 12 months	
•GS-11 to GS-12	minimum of 12 months*	
•GS-12 to GS-13	minimum of 12 months*	

\* Determined by organization policy

## Promotion Processes

- Promotions to GS-13 and below are generally managed at the directorate/office level
- Senior level (GS-14 and GS-15) promotions are managed at the Center level
- Availability of senior positions opportunities is influenced by:
  - Organizational and mission needs
  - Turnover, both actual and projected
  - Trends in senior grade levels both at MSFC and in NASA
  - Salary budget constraints



## SUMMARY

- Center goal is to shape pay and promotion processes to support mission needs, budget constraints, and career development needs
- Expect processes and systems to be continually changed to adapt to emerging needs
- HR goal is to help you and your people understand the systems we have and the “why” behind them